Erie County Department of Mental Health
HUD Process Improvement Team
2005 Year-to-Date Meeting Summary

Participants: TSI, LODP, LSBH , STEL, BFNC, WNYVHC, Cazenovia Recovery,
          Horizon Human Services, Spectrum Human Services, Housing Options,
          Aids Community Services, Restoration Society

Facilitators: Don Dauman, ECDMH Contract Coordinator

Co-Facilitator: Eric Weigel, Erie County Housing Coordinator

Overview of Report:

This report serves as a status report and a year-to-date summary of progress made in the HUD Process Improvement Team (HUD PIT) meetings. Included in this report you will find all decisions on standardized policies and procedures that have been resolved to date, a list of policies in process and other decisions made regarding the system of housing grants. More importantly I have included a section labeled "Issues in Development" for your review. Please pay particular attention as this includes critical information on issues related to ECDMH contracting and the developments in the Continuum of Care under the direction of the Homeless Alliance of Western New York (HAWNY) that will effect all of us in the very near and immediate future.

Eric and I would like to take this opportunity to also thank everyone for his or her consistent attendance and participation in this process. In particular thanks go to those new providers who have made significant progress by availing themselves of the expertise of the more experienced providers. While every participant has made an exceptional effort toward the goals of this group, I would especially like to thank John Braciszewski, Tracey Johnson, Mark Kraus, Doug Braddock and Eric Weigel for their outstanding level of support in consulting with new providers during the implementation of their individual grants and for their extra time in additional workgroups and with additional work assignments between group sessions to assist with policy development and completion of the HUD Supernofa application. Your hard work and willingness has not gone unnoticed and I ask that you please extend my appreciation to your administration leaders for supporting your time on these assignments.

This group initially met almost two years ago to simply address some questions around cost accounting and translating some confusing HUD requirements. In my estimation it has and continues to evolve into an extremely collegial and collaborative forum focused on providing effective programming for our consumers and developing a true learning environment for all of us.

1. **Policy and Procedure:**

    The policy and procedure manual for HUD grant operations is close to completion. A complete packet along with a new CHPS referral packet and procedure manual will be distributed by our December meeting for full implementation. In the meantime, the group has reached final decisions on the following procedures:

    a. Admission: procedure is complete with revisions to:
        i.   Procedure (page 1, item #8) now requiring professional verification of disability (physician, psychiatrist or other licensed professional)
        ii. Section A to encompass all types of disability covered under our programs
        iii. Section C to account for the impending change to the admission criteria for all permanent housing S+C and SHP grants being renewed in the 2005 competition. Many of these renewals will be effective 1/1/2006. Per HUD guidelines eligibility will be limited to individuals coming from the street, shelters, transitional housing programs and hospitals or institutions with stays of 30 days or less. Evictions and other previously acceptable forms of homelessness will no longer be eligible with new admissions following the start of your renewal or new grants awarded in the 2005 competition. This will NOT affect existing tenants of these same programs. Transitional Housing program components such as those at Caz Recovery Visions Place and DePaul THP component may continue to use additional criteria.
        iv. Section D has been added to provide documentation to determine "Chronic Homelessness" which HUD now requires all programs to account for and is reflected in your APRs.
             A final version will be distributed at the October meeting.

    b. Income Verification and Rent Calculations: Complete with all information and necessary definitions. Included in the policy is the excel spreadsheet that automates the entire income and rental stipend determination with minimal data entry requirements. This worksheet was distributed mid-year and should be in place at most programs.

    c. Housing Inspection: a new procedure and form have been completed for use by all programs upon apartment move-in and annually thereafter. A long version for reference purposes and a short checklist version for individual chart documentation have been created and distributed.

    d. Lead Based Paint: as required by HUD a procedure is still in discussion but close to being finalized to document lead based paint notification and stabilization for pre-1978 structures under lease in HUD programs.

e. Supportive Services Match Documentation: A form for such documentation, particularly in S+C grants was distributed earlier this year but has been finalized in the procedure. SHP grants are not required to demonstrate this documentation but may do so as a means of tracking leverage for grant renewals in the future if they so desire.
f. Cost Allocation Guidelines: were finalized in January of 2004 and distributed to program managers and fiscal officers.
g. CHPS Referral Packet: modifications and updates to certain pages and the core were recently completed and will be posted on the ECDMH website by November. The form used to report admission dispositions to Eric's office was modified slightly to request the admission date and should be in use by all providers.

The following policies and procedures are in development and on the agenda for the next few meetings:
a. Discharge Planning
b. Service Planning
c. Evictions and Rental Stipend Cessation
d. HMIS

2. **ECDMH Performance Outcomes:**

A meeting was held to discuss the 3 standardized outcomes for the coming 2006 Contract period. A consensus decision was reached to continue the focus on housing stability, hospitalizations and functional change with the following revisions:
a. Housing stability: no change other than to remind providers to separately track the number of individuals maintaining vs. improving their housing status per the definitions in the outcome. Providers will be evaluated on the aggregate achievement in these two areas but individual data on maintaining vs. improving was asked to be available upon request.
b. Hospitalizations: revised to include chemical dependency hospitalizations.
c. Functional Assessment: no change

At this point in time, providers should plan on these outcomes for their 2006 Contract submissions and set targets according to 2005 progress YTD. A copy of these outcomes is attached with this distribution. There will be an opportunity for revision for 2007 as we all evaluate the utility and progress of these outcomes during the 2006 contract period along with the interrelatedness of the HUD Logic Models. The Department will develop a system-wide reporting mechanism (a sort of system report card) for outcome progress with each of your 2006 POPE trimester submissions and share this information in our HUD/CHPS meetings throughout the year.

3. **Issues in Development:**

ECDMH Housing Webpage: Eric and I will be working with Jean Hennessy of our Department to develop a "Housing" page on the ECDMH website for accessing forms, policies and procedures, contact information, outcome reports, HUD resource links, best practice information and general announcements. Some email complications have occurred over the course of the year that have made our email distributions lists less than efficient at times. Therefore we will be moving toward posting all meeting announcements, schedules, meeting summaries, and important bulletins on this web page. We hope to have this available sometime in November 2005.

Continuum of Care Supernofa Submissions: provider representatives and ECDMH staff have been participating in the HAWNY process over the last several months to revamp the supernofa process. While this is still in the finalization process, providers can expect an earlier planning process. Thus far, this will include a brief summary submission of your interest or need for a 2006 submission sometime around December 2005 or January 2006. Followed by a request for your Local Applications around the Spring of 2006 and your final Federal Application once the Supernofa is announced. This will assist HAWNY by providing a better planning process and assist providers by streamlining paperwork and eliminating the usual May-June application marathon sessions.

HAWNY Homeless Management Information System: Earlier this year HAWNY announced it's plan, per HUD requirements, to begin implementation of the Homeless Management Information System to store and track data on all HUD programs. Per HUD regulations, all providers within a Continuum of Care are required to participate in this system as a condition of on-going funding. Eric Weigel, myself and other HUD providers have volunteered to sit on the HAWNY advisory committee for this project. Providers may still join and are encouraged to contact Dianne Bessel at HAWNY immediately if they care to participate in this committee since membership will be closed in the near future. Providers should be advised that participation will require a current commitment to biweekly policy, procedure and implementation meetings along with the need to put in the time to review documents and other materials for the group. The entire project is being referred to as the Buffalo Area Services Network or BAS-Net and is being led by Dianne Bessel. The advisory committee will continue indefinitely to assist HAWNY in monitoring system performance, set policy and procedure and resolve conflicts. In the future meetings are planned to be much less frequent.

This system was introduced to all providers at our August meeting and each agency was invited to send their own administrative and/or information system representatives to reach a consensus on implementation for all Erie County grants. It was determined that given the benefits for automated reporting and APR preparation that all Erie County Providers will go live on this system by 1/1/2006. This rapid implementation will provide for automated reporting on

2005 grant terms. At the September meeting, Dianne provided a demonstration of this system and distributed training requests to all attendees. Training requires one 8-hour session and various dates are available now through December 2005. Depending on the size of each providers HUD grant 1-3 licenses, at a minimum will be provided to each agency. In addition, due to the HUD requirement attached to this initiative, each agency will receive a certification to verify their commitment to training and implementation over the next several months that must be submitted as part of their 2006 ECDMH Contract documents. Many details including finalizing the required data elements, formats to be used, confidentiality releases and sharing agreements are still in process. In the meantime all providers are strongly encouraged to schedule their training sessions.

HAWNY System-wide Outcome Performance Measures: part of the HAWNY Continuum of Care revision process included a committee for the development of system-wide performance measures. These measures are now in the final stages of approval by HAWNY and were distributed at our September meeting. These are separate from the ECDMH outcomes for the 2006 contract cycle although we will look at this as a group for the 2007 contract year. These will not require any additional data collection, tracking or reporting by agencies. All necessary data elements are part of the existing APR composition and reports will be generated using the HMIS system. Individual providers will have access to monitor their individual progress but HAWNY is interested in establishing and monitoring the system as a whole against each of these performance standards.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday, October 26, 2005 from 1:00-2:30PM in room 1202 at ECDMH. The following is a tentative agenda:

1. HMIS and CoC Supernofa Updates
2. Distribution of revised admission documents and procedure
3. HUD Lead Based Paint Notification Procedure
4. Service Planning Procedure: Essential Elements
5. Discharge Planning Procedure: Essential Elements
6. Evictions/Stipend Cessation Procedure: Essential Elements